

**Missoula County Public Schools
Title I Community Advisory Committee**

Tuesday, September 24, 2013

6:00 to 7:30 PM

Administration Building, Room 14

MEETING MINUTES

Attendees: Tara Barba, Heather Davis Schmidt, Amanda Dellwo, Leslie Gallant, Sindie Kennedy, Trevor Laboski, Tracy Ledyard, David Rott and Joy Seymour.

Committee Members:

Guiding Question:

How do we assure the MCPS Title I program best meets the needs of students and families?

Long term target:

Align Title I goals, programming and budgets to the Federal requirements, MCPS district, Graduation Matters and 21st Century Model of Education goals.

Short term targets:

- Define Community Advisory Committee purpose
- Review Title I Schoolwide vs. Targeted Programs
- Review Title I budget

AGENDA

6:00-6:10	<p>Welcome, dinner, review agenda and define Community Advisory Committee purpose.</p> <p>Heather welcomed everyone and reviewed the agenda. She explained that last year committee members learned about the Title I budgets. During this meeting, we will review that understanding for returning committee members and share that understanding with new committee members.</p> <p>Heather also explained that our goal this year is to look closely at our Title I and McKinney-Vento programming.</p>
6:10-6:20	<p>Review Title I Schoolwide vs. Targeted Programs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• School-based and district-wide programming <p>The difference between a school-wide and targeted program relates to several factors. The main factor is the percentage of Free & Reduced Lunch applications, which translates to the percentage of MCPS families that live in poverty. In order to receive schoolwide Title I funding, schools must participate in a year-long planning process that involves parents and several pieces of data to assure the</p>

	<p>schoolwide plan will meet student needs. At the elementary level, there are very few buildings that have less than 40% poverty levels. We have 5 K-8 buildings that receive schoolwide Title I funding: Russell, Franklin, Lowell, Hawthorne and Porter.</p> <p>The targeted Title I programs are at the high school level: Big Sky and Hellgate. In the many years the district has received Title I funding, none of these schools have climbed above the 40% thresh hold. Seeley-Swan High School is the only high school that receives schoolwide Title I funding because their poverty rate exceeds 40%.</p> <p>The advantage of being a schoolwide program is that every student in that building can be served with Title I funds. In a targeted school, only those students with demonstrated academic need can receive Title I services.</p> <p>The targeted high schools identify students with the greatest academic need by utilizing a ranking process that is informed by multiple data points. Income is not a factor in whether students are served. Because the district has not met AYP, we are considered a district in improvement. This gives us some flexibility in spending Title I funding.</p>
<p>6:20-7:25</p>	<p>Review Title I 2013-14 Budgets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Required set-asides <p>Heather explained the Free & Reduced Lunch and feeder school data and the four budget scenarios. Heather pointed out that poverty is increasing based on Free & Reduced Lunch numbers. The elementary and middle schools are increasing in poverty, whereas the high school poverty rates decreased last year. When these numbers change, we sometimes have to make tough decisions related to Title I funding. One of the reasons Dave is here is because Chief Charlo once received Title I funding. Three years ago, three schools were grandfathered (Chief Charlo, Paxson and Lewis & Clark). Those schools had one year to increase their Free & Reduced numbers. Because their numbers did not sufficiently increase, the schools were no longer eligible for Title I funding. Funding was prioritized for those schools with the greatest poverty rates.</p> <p>The committee last year agreed to continue to prioritize Title I funding to those schools with the highest poverty levels. Last year, Paxson's numbers increased and we considered funding Paxson. This committee, the Meeting of Practitioners and district leadership considered including Paxson and decided to not include Paxson. Dave pointed out that three years ago, the schools were at the 35% thresh hold but over the years, those numbers have increased, district-wide.</p> <p>Tracy asked how the committee made the decision. She did not recall making a decision but just exploring the questions. Sindie explained she compiled all of the</p>

	<p>data, summarized it and shared it with the committee members and the Meeting of Practitioner participants. Heather shared that data with the Superintendent's Cabinet and the Board of Trustees. Tara also stressed that she never received summaries of the focus group data. She felt seeing the big picture would have been helpful.</p> <p>Heather explained that the meeting notes from any meeting will be posted to the wiki within one week.</p> <p>Heather explained money is getting tighter and needs are getting greater. She reviewed the budget, line item by line item. Heather explained the required AYP set-aside is for transportation costs related to school choice. If a Title I school does not meet AYP, a letter is sent to all qualifying families explaining that the school did not meet AYP and that the district will provide busing to a school that did meet AYP, if the family chooses. However, none of the Title I schools meet AYP requirements, therefore, families do not typically take advantage of this opportunity. The unspent AYP funds are freed up after February to be spent on other Title I expenses. The required SES (Supplemental Educational Services) set-aside is for those eligible students in Title I buildings that need additional academic support. A letter is sent to all eligible families with a list of SES providers. A per-pupil amount is designated based on the required set-aside. That money does tend to come out of the budget because families often take advantage of the SES program.</p> <p>Tracy explained that the only students that are eligible for SES are F&R students.</p> <p>All of the Family Resource Center specialists' salaries come out of the AYP and left over SES money (i.e., carryover funding). We might use funding for additional professional development. We will divvy up any other left over money to the schools to spend on district priorities (e.g., technology, professional development). Dave asked if all required set-asides have minimum amounts. Is there any flexibility?</p> <p>Heather explained we can invest more but not less than the minimum required set-aside. With professional development, we spend all of the funding and more to support instructional coaches.</p> <p>Homeless and Neglected & Delinquent Set-asides: To reach the required set-aside amount, the number of identified students in each category is multiplied by the per pupil amount. The homeless count is from non-Title I schools. The homeless set-aside funds support Families in Transition (FIT) coordinator salaries in the non-</p>
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	<p>Title I buildings. N&D numbers are based on the number of students in the entire district that are reported to OPI.</p> <p>Tracy asked if the homeless students in a Title I school are counted. Heather explained all homeless students are counted and reported to the state, but only the count from non-Title I schools affects the required set-aside amount. Sindie explained that the number of homeless students for the entire district determines the amount of funding we will receive with the McKinney- Vento grant. All homeless students are automatically eligible for Free & Reduced meals and for Title I services, regardless if they are in a Title I school.</p> <p>Joy asked how much do we carry over each year. Heather explained we are not allowed to carry over more than 15%; however, this year, we received a waiver to carry over more than 15% as a result of the sequestration.</p> <p>Parent involvement is also a required set-aside. One per cent of the entire budget is set-aside for parent involvement; 95% of that 1% has to go back to the schools. 5% of that 1% goes to the district. We spend way more than this on parent involvement. Our FRC coordinators cost approximately \$140,000 which is more like 10%. We go above and beyond Title I requirements on parent involvement spending.</p> <p>Professional Development is a 10% required set-aside. In our budgeting, we only include the minimum amount.</p> <p>Indirect costs is at 3.5%. This changes periodically. All formula grants have a formula indirect cost. Indirect costs are utilized to support the operational costs like electricity and other facilities costs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bands of Poverty and how this determines building allocations Heather proceeded to explain how the funds get allocated to buildings based on poverty rates. Heather explained that Franklin's numbers declined significantly in February last year and then were back up in March. We used the February numbers. The schools are categorized into bands of poverty based on their poverty percentage. That percentage determines the per pupil amount for their budget. <p>If Paxson were funded, this would impact the homeless and N&D funding. By adding Paxson, we are pulling resources from so many different areas, that it puts a strain on other programming in other buildings. Dave suggested that the other way to look at this is that fewer students are getting served. Dave stressed that</p>
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	<p>the legislative recognition behind Title I is that those students that are eligible for Free & Reduced Lunch are in need of academic support. Also, the higher percentage at that school creates a different environment and causes classrooms in that school look different.</p> <p>Heather shared a visual on how it impacts the entire school environment. Basically, when there is an 80% poverty rate, such as there is at Lowell, 16 out of 20 students are living in poverty and likely have significant academic need. In a school like Paxson where the poverty rate is around 55%, 10 out of 20 students are living in poverty. It does make the classroom dynamics different.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High school allocation determination: Free & Reduced Meals vs. Feeder School Model <p>Heather reviewed the high school budget and explained that the poverty rate dropped because a lot of students refuse or don't complete applications because many of them may not eat at the school (especially Hellgate because it is more of an "urban" school).</p> <p>Heather explained an alternative way to determining high school eligibility is the Feeder School Pattern: This takes into account all of the schools that feed into the individual high school. When we looked at actual geo codes, we found that many of our students are not actually attending their boundary school. Heather explained the attendance area charts and that we have a large percentage of students that do not attend their neighborhood high school. This data was shared with the Title I Community Advisory Committee, the participants of the Title I Meeting of Practitioners, the Superintendent's Cabinet and the Board of Trustees. The feedback from these groups indicated that we should continue funding the high school based on Free & Reduced Lunch data.</p> <p>When we recently uploaded the budget into eGrants (the state's grants management system), the high school budget was rejected because Hellgate did not meet the 35% minimum poverty rate. We were prompted to apply the 125% rule, which would result in Hellgate not getting any funding. We felt we could not do that. We did plan to give Hellgate a grandfather year and see how those targeting numbers came out this year. We would go through the same process of decision-making as we did last year.</p> <p>Unfortunately, we had to use the Feeder School Pattern. Based on this pattern of eligibility, Hellgate is eligible to receive more funding than any of the high schools. Nevertheless, the district office will utilize carryover funds to make up the difference to Big Sky and Seeley-Swan to assure they receive the original promised amount. Trevor asked if the state is OK with using SES/AYP money to</p>
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	<p>meet Big Sky's budget. Heather stressed that the state only requires that the funds are spent on eligible Title I expenses. She also explained that Seeley takes a big hit. It is a small enough amount that the district can support the difference with carryover funds.</p> <p>Trevor reported that Big Sky had some extra money this year. It would be really easy to hire more people. Trevor suggested that we could serve all students in the district if we focused Title I funding on getting better and meeting academic needs of all students. He felt we should focus funding on professional development, district-wide and get away from the pull-out model. Dave explained they have structured programming where students are provided leveled instruction so they are not missing anything. This is what you do with additional staffing. Trevor explained we can train people in the classroom to be more effective. No one wants to see any student not get served.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comments, questions and answers <p>Joy explained that, prior to joining this committee, she was unaware of a lot of the Title I services. She suspects many parents are unaware of these services. She also suggested there are a lot of parents that qualify for SES services, but cannot provide transportation to Sylvan.</p> <p>Tara explained her son was pulled out of science and social studies during 3rd, 4th and 5th grades for reading interventions. As such, he struggled in those subjects when he moved to middle school. The research shows that students have to be targeted in grades K-2 so that the students can catch up in 3rd, 4th and 5th grade. Tara stressed that the kids with reading difficulties do not get cured if not identified by 2nd grade.</p> <p>Heather explained the focus of our conversations this year will be on programming. We will not focus specifically on Title I, but will also consider special education and general education programming.</p> <p>Joy asked if families do not choose to take advantage of Title I opportunities, does the next student get served. Heather explained that we offer the students the services, regardless if they want it or not. We used to allow families to opt in.</p> <p>Sindie reminded everyone that the Free & Reduced Lunch application is available online and it takes Kara seconds to approve the application. This might be something to consider this year when working on getting number ups – especially in the high schools. Others suggested having computer stations available at school event (e.g., open houses) and ask families to complete the form.</p>
7:25-7:30	<p>Closing and next steps</p> <p>Heather explained that the agenda for the October 1 meeting is devoted entirely to discussing homeless and Neglected & Delinquent programming.</p>

	Next meeting date: <i>Tuesday, October 1, 2013</i>
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